

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJ: ANTICIPATED CHANGES IN ZAIRIAN PRESS

REF: KINSHASA 0136

1. SEVERAL RELIABLE SOURCES HAVE INFORMED USIS OFFICER THAT MEETING
WILL TAKE PLACE JAN 11 AT N'SELE FOR ALL NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE
PUBLISHERS AND EDITORS-IN-CHIEF TO AIR SIGNIFICANT CHANGES PLANNED
FOR ZAIRIAN PRESS.

2. CHIEF AMONG THEM: A. BOTH DIRECTORS-GENERAL OF KINSHASA'S
DAILY NEWSPAPERS WILL LEAVE THEIR POSTS TO CONCENTRATE ON THEIR
"BUSINESS AFFAIRS;" B. KINSHASA'S DAILY NEWSPAPERS, ELIMA AND
SALONGO, WILL MERGE INTO ONE NEWSPAPER WITH A DIRECTOR-GENERAL
TO BE NAMED LATER. C. KINSHASA'S TWO MAGAZINES, ZAIRE
AND HORIZONS 80, WILL MERGE INTO ONE MAGAZINE; D. ALL PROVINVIAL
NEWSPAPERS WILL BE DISBANDED.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MEASURES DESCRIBED APPEAR SOMEWHAT RADICAL,
IT SEEMS TO US QUITE PROBABLE THAT SOME OR ALL OF THEM WILL TAKE
PLACE IN THE NEAR FUTURE IN ORDER TO DIMINISH "INDIVIDUALISM AND
EGOISM," WHICH HAS RESULTED IN HIGH PROFITS FOR SELECT FEW, TO
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INSTITUTE EVEN MORE CENTRALIZED CONTROL OF PRESS AND PERHAPS ALSO

TO CUT DOWN ON COST OF RUNNING EXTENSIVE AND EXPENSIVE NEWSPAPER NETWORK.

4. MERGING OF SALONGO AND ELIMA SURPRISING AND LESS PROBABLY THAN OTHER PREDICTIONS, THOUGH DEPARTURES OF EACH DIRECTOR-GENERAL HAVE BEEN PREDICTED FOR SOME TIME. ELIMA HAS RECENTLY ANNOUNCED A CHANGE IN FORMAT (REFTEL) WHICH PROBABLY WOULD NOT HAVE OCCURED HAD IMMEDIATE

MERGING BEEN IN THE OFFING.

5. DISBANDING OF ALL PROVINCIAL NEWSPAPERS, MOST EXTREME STEP, MADE ALLEGEDLY FOR BUDGETARY REASONS. IF THIS OCCURS (TO EVEN ANY DEGREE), IT IS APPARENT THAT THE KINSHASA DAILY (OR DAILIES) WILL BE OBLIGED TO INCREASE THEIR REGIONAL REPORTING, PROBABLY AT THE EXPENSE OF NEWS OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. THIS IS ALREADY PART OF NEWLY ANNOUNCED POLICY OF ELIMA. USIS PRESS PLACEMENT WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY AFFECTED BY THE DRYING UP OF MANY OF OUR SOURCES OF PLACEMENT; E.G. THE POST PLACES 20-30 ARTICLES AND PHOTOS EACH MONTH IN REGIONAL NEWSPAPERS.

6. SOURCE ALSO INFORMS US THAT JOURNALISTS' SALARIES WILL BE PAID DIRECTLY BY GOZ RATHER THAN FUNNELED THROUGH DIRECTORS-GENERAL OFFICES AS PART OF MONTHLY SUBSIDY. AS INDICATED REFTEL, MUCH OF REVENUE FROM ADVERTISING (NOW BANNED) WENT INTO POCKETS OF SENIOR EDITORIAL STAFF; TIGHTER CONTROL OF JOURNALISTS' SALARIES MAY INDICATE THAT SOME OF MONTHLY SUBSIDY FOUND ITS TRUE HOME OTHER THAN IN IT PROPER PLACE.

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